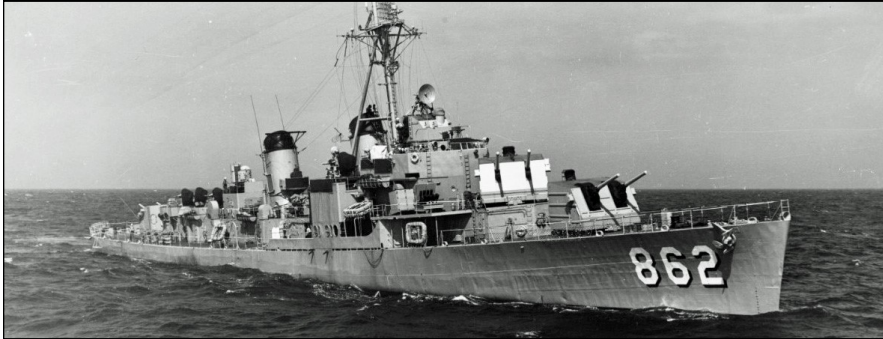


# VETERANS UPDATE

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2      FEBRUARY, 2020

## BLUE WATER VIETNAM VETERAN CLAIMS



The USS Vogelgesang, a destroyer that served off of Vietnam from July 28 to Nov. 10, 1966, providing antisubmarine defense, and naval gunfire support for troops. (U.S. Navy Photo)

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has begun deciding claims for the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019.

The Act extended the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to Veterans who served no more than 12 nautical miles offshore of Vietnam between Jan. 6, 1962, and May 7, 1975, as well as Veterans who

served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone between Jan. 1, 1967, and Aug. 31, 1971. These Veterans can now apply for disability compensation if they have since developed conditions presumed by VA to be related to herbicide exposure, a list of which is at <https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/related-diseases/>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Feb. 14, 2 - 3:30 p.m., Joint Veteran Town Hall**, 5th floor auditorium, main hospital building. Get updates from VAMC, VBA and R.I. Veterans Services leadership, ask questions and get answers.

**Feb. 21, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m., Women Veteran Networking & Focus Group**, Middletown VA Clinic, One Corporate Place, Middletown, RI. Help us "Stop Harassment Now!" by discussing harassment you may have experienced and learning how to report a harassment situation if it occurs.

**March 12, 1 - 3 p.m., Women Veterans Celebration**, 5th floor auditorium, main hospital building. Guest Speaker: Dr. Mary Raum. Celebrating women Veterans of all eras for their courage and contributions across the generations.

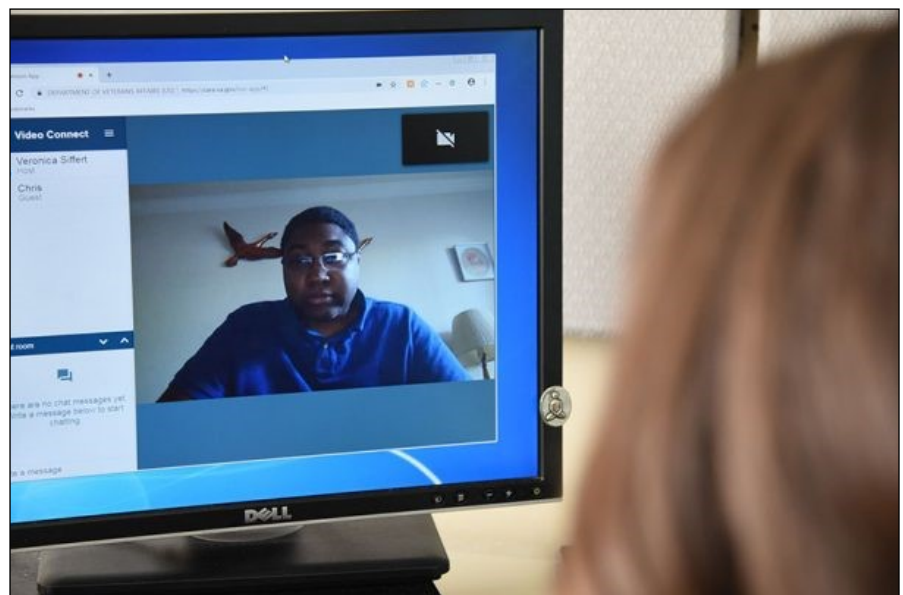
## IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE WITH VA VIDEO CONNECT

VA Video Connect lets Veterans connect from any device that has an internet connection via desktop, smartphone or tablet, and receive personalized health care wherever they are.

Veterans can use their device's camera to work with providers through online video appointments — even including family members and caretakers.

Ask your provider if VA Video Connect could be a part of your care plan.

Learn more about this and other VA Telehealth services at <https://telehealth.va.gov/>.



## DAV VOLUNTEERS ARE AT YOUR SERVICE



From left to right, U.S. Air Force Veteran Edward Napolitano, service officer with Chapter 21 of the Disabled American Veterans in North Providence, Army Veteran Thomas Yuppa, also a service officer with DAV Chapter 21, and Air Force Veteran Donna Coffin, service officer with DAV Chapter 10 in Cranston, at the Providence VA Medical Center, Jan. 14, 2020 (Providence VAMC photo by Winfield Danielson).

**V**olunteers play many roles at the Providence VA Medical Center, helping provide a positive experience and broadening the services we can offer.

Our Volunteers help patients find where they need to go in the facility, provide reading material and entertainment, help drive Veterans to their appointments and often just provide companionship. One group of Volunteers helps their fellow Veterans access the VA benefits and services they have earned.

The Disabled American Veterans service officers are located in rooms 4 and 5 in the basement of the main hospital, down the hall from the barbershop, and available Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"You don't have to be a DAV member. We help all Veterans, more than 2,800 in 2019," said Army Veteran Thomas Yuppa, a service officer with DAV Chapter 21 in North Providence, R.I., who is also a retired VA Veterans service officer. "But I don't think many Vets know we're here."

There is a clipboard outside their offices. Veterans who need assistance write their name on the list and wait in the waiting room down the hall. Veterans are called on a first-come, first-served basis.

"We're patients here, too, and we help a lot of Veterans with questions that might be similar to ones you have," added Air Force Veteran Donna Coffin, with DAV Chapter 10 in Cranston. "We share our experience, so you don't have to figure it out by yourself."

The DAV is a congressionally chartered Veterans Service Organization approved to help Veterans file VA disability claims and appeals, and applications for other VA benefits. A list of other chartered VSOs can be found at <https://republicans-veterans.house.gov/resources-for-veterans/veterans-service-organizations.htm>.

"The bottom line is that we're a free resource for you — why don't you stop by and see how we can help?" asked Air Force Veteran Edward Napolitano, a service officer with DAV Chapter 21.



### Providence VA Medical Center

830 Chalkstone Ave  
Providence, RI 02908  
401-273-7100

**Veteran's Crisis Line:**  
800-273-8255 press 1

**Patient Call Center (PCC):**  
401-457-3336

**Pharmacy Call Center:**  
866-400-1241

**Office of Community Care**  
401-273-7100 ext. 3015

**Account Balances:**  
401-457-3344

**VA Benefits Information**  
800-827-1000

**Website:**  
[www.providence.va.gov](http://www.providence.va.gov)

**Facebook:**  
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VAProvidence](https://facebook.com/VAProvidence)

**Twitter:**  
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